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SERVICES OF THE MARINES DURING THE CIVIL WAR.*

"Semper Fidelis."

THE United States Marine Corps, although composed comparatively of a small force, has performed a most important part since its organization, on the 10th of November, 1775, in all of the struggles through which the nation has passed.

As an integral part of the navy, its history is coeval with that important branch of the service. In giving, therefore, a condensed narrative of its achievements during the civil war, it is with just and honorable pride that its officers and men can point to the fact that they have been associated with those of the navy, ashore and afloat, and have always received cordial acknowledgment from the most distinguished naval commanders.

At the commencement of the civil war the services of the marines were called into requisition, and being well armed and disciplined, they were invaluable, in conjunction with our small army, especially during the time that necessarily elapsed before the newly-enlisted volunteers became acquainted with the practical duties of camp and field. In the beginning, when the army and navy was depleted by the resignations of the Southern officers, the corps lost its full share. These vacancies were rapidly filled by loyal men, and the first duty to which they were called was on the 7th of January, 1861, when two hundred and fifty artillery and marines left New York on the steamer "Star of the West" to reinforce the garrison of Fort Sumter. The expedition failed, and on the 12th of the same month the steamer returned to New York without landing the troops. This failure was due to the removal of the buoys, lights, and ranges, thus rendering a successful entrance impossible at the time. During the same month a detachment, under Lieutenant Hebb, was sent to garrison Fort Washington, on the Potomac, fourteen miles south of Washington.

On the 22d of January the entire force at the Brooklyn barracks was put under arms, and held in readiness to repel an attack by an organized force in sympathy with the Confederates. On the 12th of April, Lieutenant Cash, with the guards of the "Sabine," "Brooklyn," and "St. Louis," reinforced Fort Pickens, Fla., and received most complimentary acknowledgments from its commander, Colonel Brown. On the night of the 20th the "Pawnee," with one hundred marines on board, under the command of Lieutenant A. S. Nicholson, entered the harbor of Norfolk. Her arrival was not unexpected, and the men on the "Pennsylvania" and "Cumberland," several hundred in number, greeted her with cheers. All Norfolk and Portsmouth were thoroughly aroused by the arrival of the "Pawnee." Acting under orders, the garrison at the navy-yard,

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and the guards of the "Pennsylvania," "Cumberland," and "Pawnee," destroyed the yard and ships at that place, spiking the heavy guns and destroying property impossible to carry away. A correspondent of the *New York Times* thus wrote of the work that followed: "It is impossible to describe the scene of destruction that was exhibited. Unwearicdly it was continued from nine o'clock until about twelve, during which time the moon gave light to direct the operations. But when the moon sank behind the western horizon, the barracks near the centre of the yard were set on fire, that by its illumination the work might be continued. The crackling flames and the glare of light inspired with new energies the destroying marines, and havoc was carried everywhere within the limits of orders. But time was not left to complete the work. Four o'clock of Sunday morning came, and the 'Pawnee' was passing down from Gosport harbor with the 'Cumberland,' the coveted prize of the secessionists, in tow, every soul from the other ships and the yard being aboard of them save two. Just as they left their moorings a rocket was sent up from the deck of the 'Pawnee.' It sped high in the air, paused a second, and burst in shivers of many-colored lights. And as it did so, the well-set trains at the ship-houses, and on the decks of the fated vessels left behind, went off as if lit simultaneously by the rocket. One of the ship-houses contained the 'New York,' a ship thirty years on the stocks, and yet unfinished. The other was vacant; but both houses and the old 'New York' burned like tinder."

In the first battle of Manassas, a battalion of three hundred and fifty officers and men, mostly recruits, commanded by Major Reynolds, were present. The battalion left the barracks in Washington and reached the Virginia end of the Long Bridge at 3 P.M., July 16, and served in Porter's brigade as the support of Griffin's battery. Lieutenant Hitchcock and eight men were killed, two officers and seventeen men wounded, and sixteen missing.

At the capture of Hatteras Inlet, August 30, the marines from the "Minnesota," "Wabash," and "Cumberland," under Captain Shuttleworth, landed with the army, under General Butler, and entered Fort Clarke.

On the night of the 13th of September the Confederate privateer "Judah," at Pensacola, was destroyed by a detachment of marines and sailors. This brilliant affair was not unattended with loss on our side, one private having been killed and three wounded. On the 8th of November the squadron, under Flag-Officer Dupont, attacked the enemy's batteries at Bay Point and Hilton Head, and succeeded in silencing them, after an engagement of four hours' duration, and driving away the squadron of steamers under Commodore Tatnall. The marines and a company of seamen took possession of the forts, and held them until the arrival of the army. The bearer of the dispatches carried with him the first American flag raised upon the soil of South Carolina after the rebellion broke out. A sep-

arate battalion, under the command of Major Reynolds, left Hampton Roads on the transport steamer "Governor," with the other vessels of the fleet, and continued with them until the 1st of November. On that morning, at ten o'clock, the wind began to freshen, and by twelve or one blew so violently that they were obliged to keep her head directly to the wind, and thereby leave the squadron. Throughout the afternoon the gale continued to increase, though the "Governor" stood it well until about four o'clock. The vessel was much damaged by sea and wind, and was soon in a sinking condition. At daybreak on the 2d preparations were made for sending boats to their relief, although the sea was running high; and it being exceedingly dangerous for a boat to approach the guards of the steamer, in consequence the boats laid off, and the men were obliged to jump into the sea, and then hauled into the boats. All hands were thus providentially rescued from the wreck, with the exception of one corporal and six privates, who were drowned or killed by the collision of the vessels. The firmness with which officers and men performed their duty was beyond all praise. For forty-eight hours they stood at ropes and passed water to keep the ship afloat. It is impossible for troops to have conducted themselves better under such trying circumstances.

No event of the war attracted more attention from other nations than that which has gone into history as the "Trent Affair." On the 8th of November, Lieutenant Fairfax, of the U. S. steamer "San Jacinto," received from Captain Wilkes orders to take command of two boats and board the steamer "Trent," then hove-to under the guns of the "San Jacinto." He was ordered to demand the papers of the steamer, her clearance from Havana, and the list of passengers and crew. In the event of the presence of the Confederate Commissioners, Messrs. Mason and Slidell, with Messrs. Eustis and McFarland, on board, he was ordered to take them prisoners and bring them on board the "San Jacinto." In obedience to these orders, Lieutenant Fairfax repaired alongside the British packet in an armed cutter, accompanied by Mr. Houston and Mr. Grace. He went on board the "Trent" alone, leaving the two officers in the boats, with orders to wait until it became necessary to show some force. He was shown up by the first officer to the quarter-deck, where he met the captain and informed him who he was, asking to see the passenger-list. The captain declined. Fairfax told him that he had information of Messrs. Mason, Slidell, Eustis, and McFarland having taken passage at Havana in the packet for St. Thomas, and announced his attention to satisfy himself whether they were on board before allowing the steamer to proceed. Mr. Slidell, evidently hearing his name mentioned, stepped forward and asked if he was wanted. Mr. Mason soon joined them, and then Mr. Eustis and Mr. McFarland, when Lieutenant Fairfax made known the object of his visit.

The captain opposed anything like the search of his vessel, nor would he consent to show

papers or passenger-list. The four gentlemen above mentioned protested also against being arrested. Mr. Houston was sent back to the "San Jacinto" with the information that the four gentlemen were on board, and of the position of affairs. Lieutenant Greer almost immediately arrived with eight marines, which made a total of sixteen in addition to the crews of the two boats. The four gentlemen were quietly transferred to Lieutenant Greer, after a protest on their part. The mail agent, who was a retired commander in the British navy, had much to say as to the propriety of the seizure, but Lieutenant Fairfax purposely avoided all official intercourse with him. The mail agent made some apology for his rude conduct as our force was leaving the steamer, and expressed, personally, his approval of the manner in which Lieutenant Fairfax carried out his orders.

The officers of the steamer made a great many irritating remarks to each other and to the passengers in the presence of Lieutenant Greer and the men; the marines, especially, came in for a great share of abuse.

On December 5 the marines, under the command of Commander C. R. P. Rogers, took an active part in the capture of Warsaw Island, and on the 12th of the same month the marines of the "Dale" and "Isaac Smith" engaged in an expedition up the Ashepoo, and destroyed the headquarters of the enemy near Fenwick's Island Fort. Two weeks later the marines of the "Dale," under the command of Lieutenant W. T. Truxtun, engaged and defeated an equal body of Confederates in the South Edisto, S. C., near the house of Governor Aiken.

One of the most important conquests in the history of modern naval warfare was the fight in Hampton Roads, Va., in which the famous Confederate ram, the "Merrimac," was engaged. Other pens have graphically described this engagement, and no portion of the history of the war is more familiar to the people of all sections than this. The marines of the "Minnesota," "Cumberland," "Congress," "Roanoke," and "St. Lawrence" were engaged, and fought the guns to which they were assigned with accuracy and effect. They justly won the admiration and praise of the whole loyal nation. The first shot from the "Merrimac" killed nine marines of the guard, under Lieutenant Heywood, on the "Cumberland." Lieutenant Hamersly, late of the Marine Corps, in his history of the operations of the navy during the war, says of the action of the "Cumberland": "Of the gallantry of this action, which has furnished one of the brightest as well as one of the saddest pages to the naval history of the world, it is difficult to speak in fitting terms."

In February, 1862, at Roanoke Island, in the capture of Elizabeth City and Edenton, the fall of Newbern, and the capture of Fort Macon, the marines were present and shared the honors of those victories with their brethren of the army and navy. In the early part of March, in the engagement under Flag-Officer Dupont, which resulted in the possession of Cumberland Island

and Sound, Fernandina and Amelia Islands, and river and town of St. Mary's, the fleet included the armed transport "McClellan," having on board the battalion of marines, under the command of Major Reynolds. In the early part of May the marines of the "Susquehanna," "San Jacinto," "Dakota," "St. Lawrence," "Seminole," and "Mount Vernon" participated in the shelling of Sewall's Point. In the engagement with the fort on Ward's, or Drury's Bluff, eight miles from Richmond, the marine guard of the "Galena" lost one private killed. In June, Lieutenant Lowry, of the Wabash, in command of the marine guards of the "James Adger," "Keystone State," and "Albatross," engaged in an expedition up the Santee River to destroy the bridge. The expedition failed on account of lack of water for the vessels to operate.

Early in August, Captain Parker, commanding the "Wabash," with one hundred sailors and one hundred marines, landed on Morris Island and erected a battery. For two weeks the marines and sailors worked, hauling their guns up the beach and getting them in battery. At the capture of New Orleans the marines more than maintained their reputation. On the morning of the 24th of April, immediately after the action with Forts Jackson and St. Philip, and the destruction of the rebel fleet, the marines, under the command of Captain Brown, landed and took possession of the quarantine, at the same time taking prisoners the enemy quartered in the quarantine buildings, and hoisting the flag of the United States over the same. A battalion of marines, two hundred and fifty strong, under command of Captain Broome, disembarked from the fleet on the 29th of April, and marched to the Custom House. A detachment under Captain Ramsay was left there to guard the flag then hoisted on the building. Captain Broome then marched to the City Hall, a distance of half a mile from the vessels of the fleet, and near the centre of the city. The forces of General Lovell had not yet evacuated the city, and the squares and streets were thronged with an excited mob, brandishing bowie-knives and revolvers, and hailing the marines with the most abusive language; but the command marched in close order and firm steps to its destination. Three days before the arrival of General Butler the marines took possession of and held the public buildings of the city of New Orleans, literally perfecting the conquest of the city. For three days the force held in subjection the turbulent elements of the population of the city, and, at the end of that time, gave place to the troops under General Butler. The casualties in the marines during the capture of the forts and city were: killed, five; wounded, twenty-one. At the passage of the batteries at Vicksburg the marines again participated, which resulted in one officer and two privates being wounded. On the 15th of July, in the engagement between the Confederate ram "Arkansas" and the vessels of Farragut's fleet, one officer and one private were wounded. In the early part of December a battalion of marines, under the command

of Major Garland, *en route* to California, on the Pacific mail steamer "Ariel," was captured by Semmes in the "Alabama," off the eastern end of Cuba. The officers and men were paroled, and the "Ariel," after a ransom of two hundred and sixty-one thousand dollars, was permitted to proceed on her journey. The battalion arrived in due course of time at Mare Island, when they were shortly afterwards exchanged. One hundred and fifty men, under Captain Kintzing, guarded the large amount of supplies and ordnance at Cairo and Mound City, Ill., and a detachment served on board the "Black Hawk," the flag-ship of Admiral Porter, and was engaged in the Red River Expedition.

At four o'clock in the morning, in January, 1863, during the obscurity of a thick haze, two ironclad gunboats ran out of Charleston, S. C., by the main ship channel, and attacked the blockading fleet Most of the fleet were of the light class of purchased vessels, and suffered severely. On the "Keystone State" the casualties were large, almost one-fourth of her crew being killed and wounded; the marine guard alone having one sergeant, one corporal, and six privates killed, and one private wounded. In the attack on Fort Hudson, on the 13th of March, the marines of the "Hartford," "Richmond," and "Mississippi" lost heavily in killed and wounded, the marines of the "Richmond" having "*nearly a whole gun's crew swept away by a single shot.*" On the 13th of July a battalion, under the command of Captain Grayson, was placed at the disposal of the city authorities of New York, to quell the disturbances caused by the "Draft Riots," which duty was performed to the satisfaction of the authorities, and won their marked approbation.

In the following August a battalion, under the command of Major Zeilin, sailed from New York to co-operate with the South Atlantic Squadron. The battalion was debarked on Morris Island, when the camp was established. It participated in all of the subsequent engagements which resulted in the capture of the outer defenses of Charleston. On the night of the 8th of September the battalion furnished a detachment of one hundred men and seven officers, under the command of Captain C. G. McCauley, all volunteers, to engage in the combined assault on Fort Sumter, "in which Lieutenant Bradford was mortally wounded, Lieutenant Meade captured, and thirty men killed, wounded, or missing." The marines in the "New Ironsides" participated in twenty-six engagements while attached to that vessel off Charleston.

On the 28th of December a detachment participated in the expedition, under the command of Lieutenant-Commander R. W. Meade, which destroyed the earth-works of the enemy at Stono, S. C. During this year the marines of the East Gulf Squadron, under Lieutenant Collum, were engaged on three occasions in expeditions on the coast of Florida. On the 1st of January, 1864, Lieutenant Fagan, in command of a detachment, participated in the expedition which destroyed a Confederate vessel and valuable cargo

in Murrill's Inlet. On the 19th of June, in the engagement between the "Kearsarge" and "Alabama," the marines ably sustained their reputation, the action having commenced by the rifle-gun on the forecastle, in charge of the marines, and its fire was rapid and effective throughout. During the early part of July, in an engagement between the "Wyoming" and the batteries at Simonosaki, Japan, one private was killed and one wounded. Later in the same month, when the city of Washington was threatened by the Confederates, a battalion and a battery of howitzers, under the command of Captain Forney, was stationed at Havre de Grace to repel the expected attack upon the station.

On the 5th of August, when Admiral Farragut made his attack on the defenses of Mobile, "the marines were among the foremost at every point where bravery and discipline could aid in winning victory." About this time Captain Heywood, the senior marine officer, could muster nearly eight hundred marines in the fleet of Admiral Farragut. At the capture of Fort Morgan, on the 22d of August, the marines of the fleet, under Captain Heywood, served on shore with the naval battery. In December, 1864, two batteries of naval howitzers and nine companies of marines and sailors, under Commander Preble, ascended Broad River, S. C., to co-operate with General Foster in establishing connection with General Sherman, who was on his "march to the sea." On the 30th they were repulsed at Boyd's Neck, but on the 6th of September made a successful attack at Tullifinny Cross-Roads, in which twenty-one were killed and wounded. First Lieutenant Stoddard commanded the marines, who numbered three hundred. When Charleston was abandoned, Lieutenants Stoddard and Williams occupied Georgetown, S. C., with six companies of marines, and Lieutenant Breese held the battery of fifteen guns.

"Among the last and most momentous events of this war were the two attacks on Fort Fisher by Admiral Porter. About sixty vessels constituted the fleet, and many of them, being heavy steamers, carried large guards. Lieutenant Pile, of the 'Juniata,' was killed in the first attack, and over fifty enlisted men were either killed or wounded in the second, where fourteen hundred sailors and marines constituted the assaulting column." After the capture of Fort Fisher, a portion of the marines of the fleet were stationed at City Point and Turkey Bend, in the vessels to which they were attached.

During the gloomy hours which followed the assassination of President Lincoln, the conspirators, as they were arrested, with the exception of Mrs. Surratt, were taken to the navy-yard at Washington, and guarded by the marines until their removal to the arsenal. Paine, who was confined in an apartment on board of a monitor, in the extremity of his despair attempted suicide by beating his head against the iron walls of his cell. Any further attempts were frustrated by the construction of a padded cap placed over his head, his eyes, nose, and mouth being

uncovered. On this monitor the autopsy on the body of Booth was performed by the skilled surgeons of the army and navy.

The services of the marines were recognized by the government by conferring brevets on *twenty-two* officers "for gallant and meritorious services," and on *one for "distinguished gallantry in the presence of the enemy."* Medals of honor and honorable mention were also conferred on *eighteen sergeants, sixteen corporals, one drummer, one fifer, and seventy-five privates.*

Thus ended the important incidents, so far as the marines were concerned, in connection with the civil war. If in this simple narrative of their services during those dark hours the writer has added an interesting page to the history of events, he will feel amply repaid by the knowledge that the motto of the corps is indicative of its deeds, and that the nation recognizes the debt it owes to the men who, in those trying times, nobly performed their duty.

R. S. Collum,
Captain U. S. Marine Corps.

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